

## **REMARKS**

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The Examiner rejected claims 3, 6, and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hanai et al., U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2006/0085282 in view of Yankovich et al., U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2003/0110443. The Examiner's rejection is traversed for the following reason.

In regards to claim 3, Applicant discloses a combined equipment selection system that includes multiple user terminal devices and a host computer. Each terminal device includes an operation section and a display section. The terminal devices and the host computer are connected to a communication network such that the host computer communicates with the terminal devices to obtain user information.

The combined equipment selection system receives service equipment information from a user via the operation section of the terminal device on a piece of service equipment that the user wishes to use. The user then selects at least one other combined equipment that is different from the service equipment and is suitable for being combined with the service equipment based on the service equipment information. The selection information on the combined equipment is displayed on the display section of the user terminal device.

Each user terminal device includes a means for storing the user information

entered from the operation section, a means for storing constant data regarding the service equipment and the other combined equipment, a means for storing variable data out of data necessary for selecting the combined equipment, transmitted from the host computer via the communication network, a means for receiving and updating the variable data from the host computer on the condition that the user information is transmitted to the host computer, a means for carrying out a selection operation which selects as the selection information at least the one other combined equipment that is different from the service equipment and is suitable for being combined with said service equipment, based on model information and operational conditions of the service equipment entered from the operation section. Each user terminal further includes a means for requesting a display permission from the host computer for displaying the selection information selected by the means for carrying out the selection operation onto the display section on the condition that the selection information is transmitted to the host computer, and displaying the selection information onto the display section when the display permission is obtained from the host computer.

The host computer includes a means for storing the user information obtained from the user terminal device and the selection information, a means for identifying an input from the user terminal device, and a means for transmitting updated variable data to the user terminal device when the means for identifying the input from the user terminal device identifies that only the user information is entered from the user terminal device, or transmitting the display permission to the user terminal device when the means for identifying the input from the user terminal device identifies that the selection information is entered from the user terminal device.

One major advantage of the present invention is that the host computer does not carry out a selection operation. Rather, the selection operation is performed by the user terminal device. Thus, the workload to the host computer will not increase as the number of user terminal devices increases on the network.

Specifically, when the host computer receives the user and selection information from the user terminal device the host computer gives the user terminal device a display permission to display the selection information onto the display section of the user terminal device. The user terminal device is prohibited from displaying the selection information onto the display section until the user terminal device receives the display permission from the host computer. Essentially, the host computer simply obtains the selection information and the user information from the user terminal and gives the user terminal device permission to display the selection information. The host computer, however, does not perform the selection operation.

Rather, as mentioned above, the selection operation is performed by the user terminal device. Therefore, because the host computer does not perform the selection operation, the workload of the host computer will not increase even when the number of user terminal devices on the network increases.

In regards to Hanai, Applicant respectfully contends that Hanai does not teach any of the features of the user terminal device and any of the features of the host computer. Specifically, Hanai does not teach the six features of the user terminal device and the three features of the host computer.

Rather, Hanai discloses a sales system connected to the internet 2 for communication with client terminals 31. The sales system includes an in-house network system 1 that includes multiple store terminals 11, multiple store DB's 21, a

management server 13, a management DB 23, a shopping server 15, and a shopping DB 25. The store terminals 11 are located in stores such as a sales store and the store DB's 21 are used to process the business operations of the stores. Further, the shopping server 15 and the shopping DB 25 are systems for processing shopping via the internet 2.

In Hanai the shopping server 15 and the shopping DB 25 of Hanai correspond to the host computer of the present invention. Further, the client terminal 31 of Hanai corresponds to the user terminal device of the present invention.

Referring now to paragraphs [0090], [0094], [0095] and [0097] in Hanai, paragraphs [0090], [0094], [0095] and [0097] respectively state:

"When an arbitrary user gains access to the log-in screen page of the home page that shopping server provides from the client terminal 31 over internet, the shopping server 15 reads a page (information in HTML format) as illustrated in Fig. 8 from the home page DB 253 and transmits it to the client terminal 31."

"Next, the consumable item, which is applicable to the equipment that the member, who has logged in, possesses, is judged from information of the possessed equipment read in step S13 and related information stored in the related item DB 257. Moreover, information of the consumable item is read from the material DB 252. A discount rate d corresponding to the client classification read in step S13 is obtained, and an offering price considering the

discount rate (reference price  $\times$  (1-d)) is obtained (step S15)."

"Next, such information is arranged to form an HTML document as illustrated in Fig. 10, and the HTML document is transmitted to the client terminal 31 to be displayed thereon (step ST16)."

"When the user selects any one of the categories, the shopping server 15 draws an item belonging to this category, its explanation, and a reference price from the item DB 254. Next, the shopping server 15 obtains the discount rate d from the client classification acquired in step ST13, and gains the explanation of each item and the offering price to this client (reference price  $\times$  (1-discount rate)). After that, the shopping server 15 combines information of each item read from the material DB 252 and the obtained offering price to generate the page formatted as illustrated in Fig. 12, and transmits the page to the client terminal 31 to be displayed."

In reference to the above descriptions of Hanai, the shopping server 15 generates a page and transmits it to the client terminal 31. As described in paragraphs [0094], [0095] and [0097] of Hanai, the shopping server 15 selects the consumable item which is applicable to the equipment that the member, who has logged in, possesses. Further, the shopping server 15 reads information of the consumable item from the material DB 252, and calculates an offering price and sends it to the client terminal 31. The workload of the shopping server 15, which

carries out the above-mentioned operations, will significantly increase as the number of client terminal increases.

Whereas, in the present invention, the user terminal device and not the host computer determines the selection information. As mentioned above, the host computer simply transmits a display permission to the user terminal device thereby alleviating the host computer of additional workload due to the addition of user terminal devices to the network.

Thus, Hanai does not teach the features of the user terminal device and the features of the host computer.

Further, Applicant respectfully contends that Hanai, Yankovich, or the combination thereof do not teach all the features of claim 3. Specifically, Hanai, Yankovich, or the combination thereof do not teach "a means for requesting a display permission from said host computer for displaying said selection information selected by said means for carrying out the selection operation onto said display section on condition that said selection information is transmitted to said host computer, and displaying said selection information onto said display section when said display permission is obtained from said host computer."

In regards to Hanai, the Examiner cited paragraphs [0114] through [0117] of Hanai and stated that Hanai teaches "a means for requesting a display permission from said host computer for displaying said selection information selected by said means for carrying out the selection operation onto said display section on condition that said selection information is transmitted to said host computer, and displaying said selection information onto said display section when said display permission is obtained from said host computer."

Applicant respectfully disagrees and contends that Hanai merely describes a "log-in" feature. In the present invention, once the user information has been transmitted to the host computer, the user terminal device will obtain the necessary data from the host computer. The user terminal device, however, will not obtain a display permission from the host computer unless the user terminal device requests such a permission from the host computer. Once the host computer receives the user and selection information from the user terminal device, the host computer will then give the user terminal device a display permission.

The "log-in" feature of Hanai is simply a log-in step for the user. The user is not requesting a display permission from the host computer to display selection information. The user is simply gaining access to the shopping server 15. Thus, Hanai does not teach or suggest "a means for requesting a display permission from said host computer for displaying said selection information selected by said means for carrying out the selection operation onto said display section on condition that said selection information is transmitted to said host computer, and displaying said selection information onto said display section when said display permission is obtained from said host computer."

In regards to Yankovich, Yankovich was not cited as teaching "a means for requesting a display permission from said host computer..."

Based on the foregoing, it is apparent that Hanai, Yankovich, or the combination thereof do not teach all the features of claim 1. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claim 1 based upon the Hanai and Yankovich, references are hereby requested.

With reference to claims 6 and 9, claims 6 and 9 include similar features as

claim 3. Thus, all arguments pertaining to claim 3 are equally applicable to claims 6 and 9 and will not be repeated.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 18-0160, our Order No. NIS-16015.

Respectfully submitted,

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